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# House of Commons Debates.

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FIFTH SESSION—EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.

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SPEECH

OF

MR. HENRI BOURASSA, M.P.

ON

## SUPPLY---THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 1900

Mr. HENRI BOURASSA (Labelle). Mr. Speaker, I fully realize the disadvantage of my present position at this juncture. I come rather late in the session to give explanations that were expected at the opening. The subject which I have to treat has already excited much discussion, taking from it a good deal of the interest which would otherwise be attached to it. Then, I know my position is not popular, at least, at the present. But, Sir, all these disadvantages and inconveniences affect me in no way. Waiting for the ultimate results of the policy that has been adopted, I feel that I can stand the fair and impartial judgment of my fellow-citizens of all origins in this respect, of those, at least, who think that one may be, at the same time, a loyal British subject, a thorough Canadian and a constitutional Liberal. I have already given to the House the reasons why I did not propose this motion on a previous occasion. I shall now enter upon the merits of the case without any further introduction.

It has been often stated that the intervention of Canada in the South African war originated in the motion which was adopted in this House in the month of July last. It has been even asserted that the adoption of that resolution gave a mandate to the government allowing—nay, compelling them to give armed help to Great Britain

when war was declared. The hon. leader of the opposition (Sir Charles Tupper) gave us a little of the inside history which preceded the introduction of that motion. He told us that its adoption had been urged upon parliament by a representative of the Transvaal Uitlanders. If the hon. gentleman had described that representative as the agent of the South African Chartered Company, or, in other words, as Mr. Cecil Rhodes's agent, sent here by Mr. Chamberlain—I think he would have come closer to the reality. To any one who has followed the course of the Colonial Secretary on this question, the motion adopted last session bears the unmistakable evidence of Mr. Chamberlain's inspiration. That reference to the suzerainty of Her Majesty over the Transvaal is sufficient to cause us to understand where the motion comes from. I have already explained to the House how Mr. Chamberlain, alone amongst all British statesmen, restored that suzerainty out of his own free will and imagination thirteen years after it had been abolished by the British government. Another proof of the origin of the motion is the discreet but straight approval of Mr. Chamberlain's policy which is contained in the motion. But, Sir, whatever opinion we might have of the purpose underlying the motion and of its real author, I do not see how it can be as-

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serted that it implied our intention to go to war in South Africa. That contention, if made by the government, would deprive them at once of one of their few excuses for not having called parliament, and for having taken public money without the authorization of the representatives of the people on the pretense that it was an unforeseen emergency. If we meant going to war in July, how could war in October be unforeseen? I find in the Toronto *Globe* of October 7th last, a straight refutation of that contention. It says:

The fact that the case of the Uitlanders did come before parliament at its last session, and that parliament adopted resolutions of sympathy with the Uitlanders, does not dispose of the question of parliamentary sanction for the raising of a force for South Africa. . . . There was nothing said, so far as we can see, which indicated an intention of authorizing the government to act without the consent of parliament.

Then the article goes on with the argument that so far Canada had taken part in no Imperial war, and it adds:

. . . It is competent for us, of course, to take a new departure in that respect; but it is a very great question indeed whether a government should take that departure without consulting the representatives of the people. And certainly nothing was said in parliament which would warrant such a step.

There was another reason why we did not expect or mean war at that time. The South African Republic had made repeated offers to submit the whole difficulty to arbitration. And both before and after refusing these offers Mr. Chamberlain accepted them a couple of times. The very day that our parliament adopted that motion of sympathy with the Transvaal Uitlanders, the Colonial Secretary instructed Sir Alfred Milner to invite President Kruger to appoint delegates to a commission of arbitration. Moreover, the Hague conference had about closed its meetings. It had not been successful in all its aims; but one principle at least was emphatically proclaimed, thanks to the great influence of the British representative, Lord Pauncefote, and that was the principle of arbitration in all international disputes which did not involve the honour of states—this certainly was one of those cases which could be submitted to arbitration. The differences between Great Britain and the United States over the Venezuela affair were just about to be settled by arbitration; and at the same moment we ourselves were and are still seeking for arbitration to settle our differences with the United States over the Alaskan boundary matter. Who could have thought at the last session of this parliament, that Mr. Chamberlain would go back on his own words and refuse arbitration with the South African Republic? A thorough British Liberal such as I am, I would not have believed for my part that we accepted arbitration when we had to deal with great

nations, but that we refused or repudiated arbitration when we had to deal with small states.

Moreover, it was not the first time that this parliament had adopted resolutions of that kind without ever thinking of enforcing them by armed sanction. In 1882, a motion was passed unanimously by this House favouring the adoption of Home Rule for Ireland; and, if I remember well, it brought back from the British government a reply, the plain translation of which was: Mind your own business. In 1886, Mr. Blake moved a similar resolution which did not meet with the same unanimous support. References were then made to the reply of the British government of 1882. Mr. Blake contended—and rightly too—that all British citizens in any part of the empire had the right of petition and remonstrance to the Crown. But, Sir John Thompson replied that, true as Mr. Blake's theory was, yet, the Home Rule question was a bone of contention between the two political parties of England, and that we should avoid playing into the hands of the one or the other of these parties. Mr. Blake's motion passed, only after it had been amended in that sense. In 1891, another Home Rule resolution was introduced by Mr. Devlin but never pressed to a vote in this House. I give all this to show that the much-talked-of Imperialistic feeling, that feeling of solidarity; or, as I would put it, that feeling of intermixture between all British self-governing countries has not yet been very conspicuous, at least so far as the Irish question is concerned. However, on none of these occasions did any one ever think that, should the Home Rule question bring rebellion or war in any part of the United Kingdom or of the British Empire, we had the intention of upholding by armed force the principle we had laid down in these resolutions. Oh! but I am mistaken! Some one did propose going to war. A member of the Canadian government at the time did offer to give armed help to the people of Ulster should they rebel against the British Crown. I think it was the then Controller of Customs, and now plain member for West York (Mr. Wallace) who offered that armed help against the Crown of England. I fully understand the present Imperialistic zeal of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Wallace). He wants to make up for his past disloyalty. But he should have more indulgence for the feelings of honest citizens, who, having no such crime to expiate, do not propose to follow him in his pilgrimage towards the Mecca of Imperialism. The case of the hon. member (Mr. Wallace) was then brought to the attention of the House: it gave rise to a debate in which several members, amongst whom, I believe, the then hon. member for East York (Mr. Maclean), a namesake of the present member for that constituency (Mr. Maclean) declared that the Canadian parliament had

enough to do with Canadian affairs and should not any more get mixed up with Irish or other outside questions. Of course, Mr. Speaker, I am not the huge Britisher that the present member for East York (Mr. Maclean) is, but I have never been the puny Canadian that his predecessor (Mr. Maclean) was. At least I am referring to his predecessor, for although I have been told it is the same gentleman who represented East York then as now, I cannot believe it when I read the speech he made in the House then, and when I read the pro-British Imperialistic articles he writes now in the Toronto *World*. I cannot believe it is the same gentleman.

An hon. MEMBER. It is the very same man.

MR. BOURASSA. Is it really? Oh! what a scandal! What a conversion! As the Latin proverb says: "In medio stat virtus," and although I do not pose as the virtue in that sense, I prefer to remain where I am. I believe with Mr. Blake, that we have the right in this parliament, or outside of it, to express our sympathy with any class or any group of our fellow-British citizens seeking for redress in any part of the world. But I believe also with Sir John Thompson, that we should avoid playing into the hands of any political party in England. And I confess frankly, I felt humiliated as a Liberal of the British school, when I read Mr. Chamberlain's famous Leicester speech, which called for so many explanations and rejoinders from the British press, and even from colleagues of the Colonial Secretary. I felt humiliated, I repeat, when I read that Mr. Chamberlain boasted of having with him, against the Liberal party of England, not only the majority of the British people, but also the unanimous support of all British colonies.

For my part, Sir, I would have voted against any motion of incense to Mr. Chamberlain, but in favour of any motion of sympathy for the Transvaal Uitlanders in their struggle for the redress of real grievances; just as I would have voted for any motion in favour of Home Rule for Ireland. But what this country was not prepared to do for the Irish tenants, claiming humane treatment, bearable taxation and self-government in their native land, a part of the United Kingdom, I was still less ready to do for men of all countries going of their own free will on a foreign soil to seek gold and build fortunes.

After parliament was prorogued, events went on, until it came to the point where the Prime Minister declared that Canada was not at war with the South African Republic; that our Militia Act forbade the sending of our troops outside of Canada unless her territory was threatened; and, moreover, that parliament was sovereign in the matter, and that, without the sanction of parliament, the government could do

nothing. I think this is a fair résumé of the position taken by the right hon. gentleman in his often-quoted interview with the *Globe*. The leader of the opposition took issue with the Prime Minister. In a telegram which did not reach its destination, but which was published broadcast, the hon. gentleman advised the government to send troops right at once and not to mind parliament. The two attitudes were clearly defined and quite illustrative of the old differences between Toryism and Liberalism, both in England and here. I need not say where my sympathy stood. Ten days later the government gave up, and decided to send troops.

Am I to be termed a disloyal British subject, a traitor to my party, because I did not chose to follow the government in their course and remained where my and their leader was ten days previous, standing on law and constitution, as well as on the soundest traditions of the Liberal party, both British and Canadian? I contended from the start that parliament should have been called before such an important step was taken, and it is my contention still. I was laughed at by several papers and big and small men. The Winnipeg *Free Press* said that the Labelle people should leave me at home so that I could study constitutional laws. Another sheet excused me of my ignorance of the constitution on the ground that I was a French Canadian. I must say, however, that my contention was ably presented and frankly admitted to be true and commendable by the *Toronto Globe*, the *Hamilton Times*, the *Woodstock Sentinel*, the *Toronto Weekly Sun*, *La Patrie*, *Le Monde Canadien*, the *Quebec Telegraph*, the *Pioneer* of Sherbrooke, and a number of other papers, English and French, Conservative and Liberal. I had the testimony of the Solicitor General (Mr. Fitzpatrick), who admitted that the course of the government, technically speaking, was unjustifiable. Of course, the hon. gentleman approved of the government's action on sentimental and religious grounds. But on those grounds I think I can differ with the hon. gentleman without being taxed with too much self-confidence. On the legal ground, I fully acknowledge his great superiority, and the more willingly, too, that he sides with me. Then I had the testimony of the Prime Minister himself, who said that his government was out of law; but, of course, perhaps, he, too, being a French Canadian, does not understand the constitution. I have found also my entire justification in the remarkable speech of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright), which contained so many truths in so few words. But the hon. gentleman is not free from suspicion. I heard him say once in this House that England owed more to Canada than Canada to England. I am only surprised that he has not yet been denounced as a secret agent of Mr. Kruger.

I have heard also the hon. member for Three Rivers (Sir Adolphe Caron) say, at a meeting at St. Jérôme, that parliament should have been called; but he also belongs to the 'moccasin' element, and, therefore, might not be considered a proper authority on constitutional matters. But how could I doubt any longer that my position was impregnable when I read the following words coming from the hon. member for West York (Mr. Clarke Wallace), who said to a reporter of the Montreal *Gazette*, on the 21st of December :

I am in favour of summoning parliament immediately. In fact, parliament should have been summoned long ago to take the voice of the nation on this question.

Surely this will not be called a 'moccasin' opinion.

Let us examine briefly the excuses which have been given for not calling parliament in this case.

First, it is said that now, thanks to the terms of Mr. Chamberlain's demand for troops, the restrictions of our Militia Act were avoided. That the letter was avoided, I admit. But even then the restrictions of our Militia Act are not in the letter. There is no special article of the law which prohibits the sending of our militia outside of Canada. But that restriction is laid at the bottom of its spirit. I had prepared a somewhat complete record to prove that the spirit of our various Militia Acts, including the present one, was to provide for the defence of Canada, and not to go beyond this country. And this was done, not only with the consent but under the inspiration of British military and colonial authorities. At that time of old, selfish Little England and Little Canada policies, they believed, in England as well as here, in the sound principle of decentralization and complete self-government, which has built up the British Empire. But all reasonable men, I think, admit the fact—I spare the argument to the House. I will simply remind the House that the Militia Bill of 1862 was rejected by parliament on the ground that England was more interested to preserve Canada as her colony than Canada was to be British; that Great Britain could cause war to Canada, and that Canada could not and would not cause war to England. The same spirit fought to a less degree against the Bills of 1863 and 1868; but they passed anyhow, without any one intimating that Canada could be called to other wars than those which might threaten her territory. The diffidence of Lower Canadians especially had been greatly removed by the repeated assurances of Sir George Etienne Cartier, that the Canadian militia was organized for the defence of Canada and for that purpose only.

When the Bill of 1862 was introduced by Sir George Cartier, one of the members of that school of loyalty which the hon. mem-

ber for Kent, N.B. (Mr. McInerney) has already alluded to, Sir Hector Langevin, said that one of the reasons why Canada should have a militia was that Canada was before long to become an independent country, and should organize its territorial defence.

Now, great stress is laid upon the fact that instead of sending 2,000 enlisted men, the government enlisted 2,000 men and sent them to South Africa. I confess the distinction is too fine for my rude peasant's intellect. Oh! but they say: We don't pay, the men in Africa; they are incorporated in the British army and receive British pay. That distinction is quite wiped out now that it has been decided to make up the difference between British and Canadian pay. I was taxed with miserable niggardliness, because I proposed to strike off that difference and leave our volunteers on the same footing as British soldiers. But none the less that same difference, let it be large or small, was given as a reason for avoiding the Militia Act, and not calling parliament. If the difference was so small, when I proposed to suppress it, how could it be so big as to authorize the government to accomplish what they admitted to be an illegality, which they would not have dared to do, but for that same small difference? The only difference which exists now between our present expedition, and the sending of a regular Canadian corps, lies in the British pay, that is in a smaller amount than that which I wanted to strike off.

Whilst I am on the money question, I wish to refer now to the argument that to call parliament would have been too expensive. My hon. friend from Terrebonne (Mr. Chauvin), has already refuted that argument. Like him, I believe that most members who boast so much of their loyalty and patriotism, would have readily come here without incurring to this country the expenditure of a regular session. They who are ready to tax this country by the millions, and to call upon the farmers and labourers of Canada to bear the burden of militarism, would have gladly sacrificed a little of their time to consider the problems in which we have been involved without knowing either the terms or the results of those problems. But, supposing, it would have meant the cost of an extra session, what is that compared with the broad constitutional questions raised by the action of the government? At a time when we are so swelled with enormous Imperialistic ideas, when we are ready to conquer the whole of this little planet, land and water, and are beginning to think a little of hoisting the British flag in the moon, I think that was a rather petty Canadian point of view to take. Just imagine Cartier, Macdonald, Brown, and all the Little Canadians who made confederation, preparing the proposed National Charter of Canada by private letters, and sending it by mail to the Colonial Office, in order to save

to this country the cost of the Quebec conference and of a trip to London !

Then, we are given the excuse of unforeseen emergency. I quite admit that the government may be forced, in cases of urgent necessity, to have recourse to such means of financial action, as special warrants—provided always, it is for an expenditure within their ordinary province. But here comes a grave question like war ; the government is led to an action which constitutes a new departure in the policy of the country, and which involves a deep constitutional revolution—according, at least, to numerous authorities, including the Colonial Secretary, the Governor General of Canada, ministers of the Crown, both in England and here. Surely nobody will seriously pretend that that is one of those ordinary cases of unforeseen emergency upon which special warrants are issued every year : the burning of a post office, canal repairs, accidents on the Intercolonial Railway, or even, a contract like the Mann & Mackenzie affair !

There is nowadays a decided tendency throughout countries ruled by parliamentary institutions, of exaggerating the power of the executive. At the origin, the cabinet was a mere group of personal advisers to the Crown. The two great powers were the Sovereign and parliament. Gradually, the strength of the cabinet became increased at the expense of both the Crown and parliament. To a certain extent that was a good move, the executive powers being thus put in the hands of men responsible to parliament. But we should be careful not to go to the other extreme, and let the cabinet take, at the same time, the place of both the Crown and of parliament. We should not allow our ministers to forget that they are but the executive committee of parliament ; we should not allow them to discount too largely the subserviency of a partisan majority and adopt, by orders in council, measures of the deepest importance, which should not be initiated without the actual participation of parliament.

Now, was this a case of urgent necessity ? Where was the necessity ? And where the urgency ?

As regards the necessity, I need not repeat all the arguments that have been fully given to this House, proving that our troops were not needed in South Africa. British authorities expected only 500 men from Canada. Shall any one pretend that the fate of British arms relied upon those 500 men ? Shall any one pretend, that even now, the presence or the absence of our 2,000 soldiers can change the course of events ? The Prime Minister himself, in his speech at Sherbrooke as well as in this House, has properly refused to slander the British army, by saying that Great Britain needed our help. And a terrible slander it would be to pretend, that a country of 40,000,000 of people, with an available army of over 600,000 men, and an annual income of over

100,000,000 pounds sterling, required our help to crush down two puny countries, the whole Boer population of which according to all authorities, including the member for North Norfolk, is inferior to that of the city of Montreal. And this disposes, I think, of the sentimental argument, that when fire is at our mother's house, it is no time for fine theories and red-tape. I think this pretty sentence is taken from a letter of my good friend, the junior member for Ottawa (Mr. Belcourt), and I take this occasion to beg his pardon for not having replied to it sooner. The clang of arms, the sound of drums and trumpets, were so deafening that I hardly heard his sweet and sympathetic voice at the time.

The only indication of urgency that I can find, is in Mr. Chamberlain's despatch, dated October 3rd, and received here a few days after—Mr. Chamberlain's messages do not seem to travel any quicker than those of the hon. leader of the opposition. I am afraid that the wires are not yet up to the new movement. The despatch asked the soldiers to sail not later than October 31st. There were at that time, and for months after, thousands and thousands of English regulars not yet started from England. I cannot agree with the idea that Mr. Chamberlain's wishes or orders are a sufficient ground for building an argument of urgency contradicted by fact. Could not our government have explained to Mr. Chamberlain, as did Mr. Lyne, the Premier of New South Wales, that this is a constitutional country, and that the troops would sail as soon as parliament authorized their enlistment ? If there was then, if there is now, no necessity for Canadian troops in South Africa, how could it have been so urgent to send them not later than October 31st ?

But the plea of urgent necessity has been still more clearly disposed of by Mr. Chamberlain, by several of his colleagues, as well as by our government, and I may say, by all the public men and all the newspaper writers who favoured or opposed the sending of those troops. They disposed of it when they proclaimed that this great display of Imperial militarism is not intended for the purpose of this war, but is being organized to give an example and a warning to the world. I am free to admit that there is an element of grandeur in this argument ; but could not this example and this warning have been given just as well a month later ? In our case, would they not have been as striking and as profitable with the sanction of parliament, as when signified by order in council ?

Of course, the lesson is, I think, two-sided. It has given to this war a significance which is not deprived of danger for the prestige of the future empire. You may give to the lesson the meaning you like, but the world to which you give it may interpret that lesson the way it likes. There is no doubt as to the final results of

this war ; but its beginnings have been slow and arduous ; and that world which you defy boasts at the idea that the two little Boer republics have checked for four months 'a vaster empire than has been.'

But whatever may be the result of the lesson for Great Britain in her relations with other peoples, its actual consequence for Canada is a straight accusation against the government, for not having called parliament. If they intended really to give a lesson and a warning, they meant the lesson to be fruitful and the warning to be serious. What is the consequence ? If we send 2,000 men, and spend \$2,000,000 to fight two nations, aggregating a population of 250,000 souls, how many men shall we send, and how many millions shall we expend to fight a first-class power or a coalition of powers ? And it is, no doubt, to first-class powers and to possible coalitions, that the lesson and the warning were intended to be given. If we judged proper to share in the teaching, it must mean that we are ready to share in the action when the time comes of applying the lesson.

Then, it is the starting point of a new policy which opens a serious point of view on the future of this country. The point of view may be glorious for those who aspire after military honours. It may inspire to rhetoricians fine sounding periods or lyric stanzas to lyric rhymers. But it prepares a gloomy future for the farming and labouring classes of this country. It threatens them with the unbearable burden with which are crushed the peasantry and the working masses of European nations. It is that burden which Little Englanders and Little Canadians had heretofore spared to England and to Canada. No wonder that this government hesitated before opening the door on such a dark unknown ! But would it not have been advisable to pause somewhat longer and to let the people know the possible consequences before pushing us towards that unknown by a mere order in council ?

Of course, I am met here by the 'no precedent' clause contained in the order in council. I am free to say that this clause is the only thing which I can approve of in the whole course of the government ; but I am afraid it is a frail barrier to oppose to the current of noisy militarism which is carrying us all over British possessions. It is that fear which I expressed in my letter to the Prime Minister when I said : 'The precedent, Sir, is the accomplished fact.'

Let us see now in what way the action of the government was interpreted by those who approved of it, as well as by those who condemned it.

I had prepared a whole bunch of quotations taken from newspapers and periodicals to prove that the almost unanimous voice of the press, British, Canadian and foreign, interpreted the government's action the same way as I did. We heard a few

feeble voices to the contrary coming from Liberal papers in Quebec anxious to cool down the anxiety of the people.

The London *Outlook*, to my mind, summed up the whole situation in the clearest and shortest way—just four words :

This is Imperial Federation.

I spare the other quotations to the House ; the comments of the press are well known to all of us. But we should not minimize their importance ; it is upon the voice of the press as an expression of public opinion, that the government based their action ; the interpretation of such action by the same voice must have some weight.

I will devote some attention, however, to the interpretation given to the action of the government by the Colonial Secretary, and by the representatives of the British government in Canada.

We see in the official correspondence brought before the House that a copy of the order in council deciding the despatch of our troops was sent to Mr. Chamberlain. He has surely read it, and therefore read these lines :

Especially as such an expenditure, under such circumstances, cannot be regarded as a departure from the well known principles of constitutional government and colonial practices, nor construed as a precedent for future action.

What did the Colonial Secretary reply on date November 15, last :

The desire thus exhibited to share in the risks and burdens of the empire has been welcomed, not only as a proof of the staunch loyalty of the Dominion and of its sympathy with the policy pursued by Her Majesty's government in South Africa, but also as an expression of that growing feeling of the unity and solidarity of the empire which has marked the relations of the mother country with the colonies during recent years.

Mind you, there was nothing said in the order in council about sharing in the burdens of the empire, about unity and solidarity. Take off the diplomatic ornaments of these two statements ; put them in plain English and tell me if they do not read as follows : 'We send you those men, but we do not promise to do it again in the future.' Mark my words. I do not say : 'We shall not do it—but simply : 'We do not promise to do it.' And the reply : 'I accept it as a proof that you are ready to do it again and every time.'

I say, Sir, that under diplomatic reticences and fine forms of language, this is the most insolent message that a Canadian government has received from Downing Street since the time the Duke of Newcastle asked from the Macdonald-Sicotte government, to put the militia expenditure above parliament's action. But at that epoch of Little Canadianism we knew how to reply to colonial secretaries, and the reply of the Canadian government contained such an as-

sertion of self-government that it brought back from the noble Duke the most exquisite apologies and explicit pledges to not try it again. I regret that Mr. Chamberlain has not been made to understand that when the Canadian government speaks, it means exactly what it says and not what Mr. Chamberlain or any other Colonial Secretary may choose to mean.

Now, what about representatives of the Crown here. At the departure of the first contingent at Quebec, four speeches were made—four remarkable speeches, as the *Montreal Star* put it. I leave aside the speeches made by the Prime Minister and by the Minister of Militia. The point I wish to make now is the earnestness of Imperial authorities in the matter. What did General Hutton say?

This is in its way a matter of satisfaction, but, gentlemen, what, after all, is the contribution of 1,000 men to the requirements of a great empire? This is, numerically, nothing; and what Canada has to look to, if she is to fulfil her role as a portion, and one of the greatest portions of the great confederation of the mother country and her colonies, called the British Empire, is that the time may come when not 1,000 men, but 50,000 or 100,000 may be required to maintain the unity, the integrity, nay, the very existence of our empire.

On other occasions, the Major General had spoken of organizing this country on a military footing, of arming 50,000 men for peace and 100,000 for war. He neglected to say if he intended waiting for parliament's authorization. Street gossips, which generally lie, but sometimes say the truth, went as far as to whisper that the gallant officer boasted of having smashed a government in Australia and of being ready to do the same here. Fortunately for the government and for the ratepayers of Canada, that bellicose warrior will now exert his military spirit against the Boers.

What did His Excellency the Governor General say on the same occasion:

Canada has freely made her offerings of this military contingent to the old country, and in so doing has accepted the difficulties which she knows must follow.

The people of Canada have no desire to consider the quibbles of colonial responsibility. What they have done is to insist that their loyal offers should be made known, and they heartily rejoiced when they were graciously accepted.

The day before, His Excellency gave a dinner at the Citadel, where he is reported by the *Quebec Chronicle* as having said:

This contingent is the first present which Canada gives in the great Imperial cause. It is a new departure, and the future is full of possibilities. The present expression of Imperial union was more expressive than any written constitution could be. The sending of these troops may raise the question of Imperial federation; he was not here to discuss that question. He has always been opposed to written constitution. He would prefer to trust the feelings of the heart.

I have compared this report with those of the *Toronto Globe*, of the *Montreal Gazette*, and of the *Montreal Star*, and they are almost identical.

It is not my intention to make remarks that would show any disrespect towards the representative of the Crown—even should the rules of this House not forbid me doing so. I have the greatest consideration for His Excellency, not only because he represents here the noble woman whom every true Britisher is proud to call the Queen: I admire also the gallant soldier that has already given proofs of his bravery.

But public men and newspapers have used those words in order to support their contention and attain their political ends. They have given to His Excellency's words a significance which neither he nor we can accept as the true expression of his thought. Of course, if His Excellency meant, when he said that he was opposed to written constitution, that Great Britain was far better without a written constitution, I fully agree with him. But in this country we have a written constitution. And that constitution is not only the legal form of our government: it is also a solemn and sacred compact between the various provinces of British North America. It was framed with great care and solicitude by the best men of those provinces. Those men belonged to different religious creeds, to different races, to different political parties. They united their efforts and their good-will to frame that document, in order to put a stop to dangerous rivalries, and to offer to the world the comforting and glorious spectacle of a broad, united and free nation, devoted to the Crown of England. That charter was accepted by the representative bodies of each and every party concerned. It was ratified by the parliament of Great Britain, and sanctioned by the regal seal.

Of course, like all human deeds, it is not an ideal work. It may need reforms and additions. But as long as it stands, it stands as it is, to be respected by all citizens, high or low, rich or poor—by those who have charge of its application as well as by those who have to submit to it. A too rigid interpretation of it might properly be called colonial quibbles, a too loose interpretation might become a crime against the nation. And when it will require amendment, it will not be done by correspondence between Downing Street and Rideau Hall—that time has passed long ago—but by the free and independent action of both the Canadian and the British parliaments and approved by the people of Canada.

The day after the departure of the first contingent, His Excellency was present at the Hallowe'en concert in Montreal. A gentleman named Mr. Donald MacMaster, a lawyer by profession, I believe, presented his compliments to His Excellency, and found the occasion proper to give vent to

his legal science. He ventured the opinion that according to our Militia Act, the Governor General of Canada could command our militia in person and send it wherever and whenever it pleases him. The report does not say what His Excellency thought of the learned barrister's advice. But knowing, as we all do, the unbounded respect that all our governors have had for the last fifty years towards representative institutions, I am sure that His Excellency had of that advice the same opinion as I have myself: That it is a Tory interpretation of the law. At the time of Charles I, the King was the King, without and above parliament. But the unfortunate monarch, and all his successors to come, were made to understand that parliament meant the government of the people, by the people and for the people. And in these days of ours, the King, or the Queen, or the Governor General, everywhere their august names appear on statute-books, should always read: The Governor General, or the Queen, or the King 'through their advisers'—that is, through the executive committee of parliament, responsible itself to the people. Scientific interpreters of the law should never forget that.

When the 'no precedent' clause has been so totally neglected, forgotten, or even contradicted by the highest authorities, I think, Sir, it is about time that it should be recalled by parliament to the memory of those authorities, and it is what I shall ask the House to do to-night.

Now, a word about the famous argument that public opinion demanded this action. My hon. friend from Laprairie and Naperville (Mr. Monet) has shown pretty conclusively that public opinion was not so unanimous as many people think, or rather say. The member for St. James Division, Montreal (Mr. Desmarais) has completed the evidence in his eloquent address, which, I am sure, the English-speaking members of this House regret deeply not to have understood.

Without referring to a past debate, I may be permitted to say that those two speeches have built up an irrefragable testimony that the almost unanimous voice of the press in the province of Quebec, representing all shades of public opinion—from the old Rouge element to the deepest Bleue school now quartered at Three Rivers—spoke in unmistakable terms against the participation of Canada in the Transvaal war, and more especially against the imperialistic movement. I need not add anything to that evidence.

Of course, newspapers change like times and men. The servile organs of both parties have been made to bring their voice to the right tune; but there are still several newspapers which resist energetically the Jingo movement or give way to it most reluctantly. And those papers are not confined to the province of Quebec. Take the

Toronto *Weekly Sun*; take the *Country and Citizen*, organ of the trades' unions; take *La Vérité* of Quebec; take the *Westminster* of Toronto, the Presbyterian organ; take *Le Pionnier*, organ of one of the most distinguished Conservative members of the Quebec legislative assembly, Mr. Chycoine; take *Le Monde Canadien*, organ Hon. Mr. Nantel, Commissioner of Public Works in the late Conservative administration of Quebec, and still member for Terrebonne in the legislature; take even to a less degree, *La Patrie* of Montreal, the *Daily Sentinel* of Woodstock, the *Quebec Telegraph*, the *Hamilton Times*, the *Toronto Star*, and even the *Toronto Globe*. Surely, all those papers represent something of public opinion. It may be objected that most of them, those especially that share more completely the views I am expressing, have a limited circulation, and therefore represent a much smaller portion of public opinion than the great dailies. Do not judge a man by his looks and do not appreciate the influence of a newspaper by its circulation. Why, Sir, if such an absurd theory was accepted, of gauging public opinion by the circulation of newspapers, this government should walk out of power without delay; for the two papers which have by far the largest circulation in Canada, *La Presse* and the *Montreal Star*, are both opposed to this government. It should not be forgotten that people buy those papers, the latter especially, for news, cartoons and sensational reports. Whoever thought of reading the *Montreal Star* for an idea or a principle? Just as well to study Chinese with a German grammar and a French dictionary. And then, there are two kinds of public opinion: There is the opinion of the men who talk and crow, and there is the opinion of those who think, who study, who work and who pay. That opinion may be heard later on when millions upon millions will have accumulated in the budget for war purposes in Africa, Asia, Oceania and everywhere else, especially if the party which is ruling now in England remains at the head of affairs. I hope for the future of this country, that the time is not far off when the Little Englanders who have made England what she is, will have come back to power in England.

But, supposing the wave of public opinion would flow in any direction, does it follow that a government must of necessity give way to the current?

It is true that under democratic institutions, we are the servants of the people, but we must also inform and instruct the people. And there lies the difference between sound democracy and unprincipled demagogery. The charge I make against this government is not so much that they acceded at last to what they call public opinion, but that they neglected, through their organs

and their supporters, to enlighten public opinion.

The South African problem was a question entirely foreign to Canada, in right as well as in fact. Who, but a few specialists and scholars, knew anything about the Transvaal some few months ago? The newspapers that I have already named published several articles—some very good and some half-hearted—against Canada's intervention. But for weeks and for months the yellow press, headed by the Montreal *Star*, were filling their columns with inflamed articles and reproductions from the Jingo press of England—whilst the counterpart so ably presented in Great Britain by the sound Liberal organs was never or very little given by our English Liberal papers. War arguments were given for all classes of opinion. The Montreal *Star*, the Toronto *News*, and others of their kind went as far as appealing to French Canadians and to Irish Catholics on religious grounds, telling them with a deluge of crocodile tears how badly Catholics were treated by the Boers. It is very amusing to compare those devout sermons with the official documents. Take, for example, the report of the Bloemfontein Conference which filled nine compact columns, small text, of the London *Times*. The sittings lasted five or six days: many questions were treated: The franchise, the representation in the Volksraad, the conscription laws, the dynamite monopoly, the gold taxes—but not a word of ill-treatment of Catholics. Fortunately for the Roman Catholic Uitlanders, some good Canadian Tories thought of them. No doubt, when the war is over, the British government will send for Mr. Dalby, or perhaps for the member for West York (Mr. Wallace) to act as special commissioners for the redress of Roman Catholic grievances in the Transvaal.

I am only surprised that, after the almost one-sided frantic campaign of the press, to which our people have been subjected, the display of Jingoism was not far stronger. It can be explained only by the assertion I have already made that largely circulated papers, covered with cartoons and big headings, have less influence with the people than with members of parliament or of governments.

A good little paper—neither French nor French Canadian—an English paper published in Ontario, the Bobcaygeon *Independent*, painted the situation in a most picturesque and striking way, the very day the order in council was adopted. It said:

The public mind is in a dangerous state. Nervous spasms are perceptible, and this time it is the Tory press that, for political purposes, is playing with the public nerves. A hullabaloo is being raised about sending a little army to fight the Boers. Mr. Laurier says that any one who is anxious to get himself perforated with Boer bullets is welcome to go, but so far as the government incurring the expense of sending an army to Africa, it is quite impossible

for it to be done without the sanction of the people's representatives. Mr. Laurier speaks perfectly good sense. . . . Canada, at the present moment, is in urgent need of a cooling dose, or it will be in the throes of a military hysteria, from the effects of which it will not recover for many years. If Mr. Laurier is the statesman that he is credited with being, he will hold a block of ice to the back of Canada's neck, and no matter how vigorously she may kick and claw, hold firm.

But granting, for the sake of argument—which I do not otherwise—that the Montreal *Star* and its crew of noisy imitators represented public opinion, are we to be told that in a free British constitutional commonwealth governments may or must act upon newspaper articles and cartoons? I know that in the new policy, inaugurated by Mr. Chamberlain in England, and in Canada by the hon. leader of the opposition (Sir Charles Tupper), parliaments are going to be reduced to the condition of smoking concerts where the representatives of the people will be called to applaud or to miss a varied programme of acrobatic performances, accompanied with deafening war chants and coon songs, which will be given by the actors engaged for the season by the editors of yellow papers. But until we are ripe for that ideal form of government, I claim that the only medium through which the executive can act in important matters is the sovereign parliament of the nation duly assembled in session. And when an important change is to be made in the constitution it must be sanctioned by the people itself.

Is that doctrine wrong and unworthy of a true British citizen and disloyal to the noble Crown under which the British nation enjoys its freedom of government? If it is, let this Liberal government and the Liberal majority of this House declare it tonight by opposing this motion. But I say that should they adopt such a course, they would lose every right to call themselves Liberals. They might retain the label, but it would be a fallacious sign; they would have renounced the very principle upon which British Liberalism was founded. trample down the principles upon which Canadian Liberalism is based, and for which fought so long the political ancestors of the men who have received from the people the right to govern this country for five years. I am not alone to talk, and far less alone to think as I do now. On November 4, the Toronto *Globe* published an article on the 'Future of Canada,' which to my mind is the best justification of my attitude. In fact, after having read it, I wrote to the editor of the *Globe*, and had he been present at some of my meetings in Labelle, I would charge him with plagiarism. The article is a long one: I shall content myself with reading the most remarkable passages:

If a government to-day usurps the powers of parliament the effect may be felt after the pre-

sent situation has passed into history. Every Canadian who desires the honour and prosperity of his country is interested in the power and independence of parliament and in the freedom of its discussions. One of the most serious dangers which threatens the parliamentary system here, as in Great Britain, is the tendency to increase the strength of the executive at the expense of parliament. . . . It would be dangerous, too, to allow the government to fall into the habit of acting on expressions of public opinion. It may be said that to-day those expressions are so hearty and spontaneous that there is no danger of straining the constitution. But all of us, Liberals and Conservatives, can conceive of an unscrupulous government—on the other side of politics, of course—making a very cunning and dangerous use of the power to act upon public opinion as expressed in newspapers and public meetings. 'Suffer not the old kings under any name.' Parliament is the place for the discussion, the place where great public questions can be decided with effective guarantees of freedom and order. . . . Loyalty to the Queen does not mean loyalty to Gladstone or Salisbury to Chamberlain or Morley, to men who may be removed by the people at the polls, or to the Liberal or Conservative party of Great Britain. Our ministers must look for their instructions, not to ministers at Westminster, but to the parliament of Canada, of which they are a committee, and to which alone they are responsible.

I cannot believe that public opinion so irregularly manifested, could be the only, or even the main motive which forced this government to such sudden change of policy. What happened between the 3rd and the 13th of October? A despatch was received from Mr. Chamberlain. We have now—or at least we are supposed to have now—the whole correspondence between the British and the colonial authorities, and what do we find? We find that no offers were made by Canada to Great Britain, any more than by Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia. In fact, only two governments, or two parliaments of the self-governing colonies, had made offers, namely, New Zealand and Queensland, and we will see later on what happened there afterwards. In Canada, a private offer was made by Colonel Hughes, and transmitted to the British government, and politely declined by Mr. Chamberlain: a further evidence that help was not needed. Then, a despatch is sent to the Canadian government by Mr. Chamberlain, accepting offers that had never been made, giving the regulations for enlistment, the date of embarkation, &c., &c. A strange system of correspondence, indeed, by which the reply is sent before the letter was written, but I suppose all this forms part of the new policy and new diplomacy. The Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte), has termed that strange document an invitation to send troops. Well, Sir, I have made up my mind that I will not be put on the next list for decorations, and, therefore, I go one better than the hon. gentleman (Mr. Tarte), and I say that this is a demand for

troops. I admit that the word 'demand' is not actually there, but there are fine ways of doing things in these days of new policy and new diplomacy. After the agent of Downing Street has extorted from parliament a rushed expression of opinion; the public press—the reptile press, I should say—is set at work; the feelings of the people are aroused; private offers are sought for, and refused, and then a letter is sent to the Canadian government, after having been published in the London papers, accepting offers that had never been made, and putting the date so short, that it left no time for calling parliament. It left no time even for due reflection, and, therefore, the government was placed between the alternatives of immediate and complete obedience; or of refusing the demand at the risk of being accused of disloyalty, and high treason, and of being painted throughout the British Empire as a traitor government. I say, Sir, that this policy may be new in form, but it is the same old spirit of government from Downing Street; and I, for one, do not want any more of it. And, when the Canadian government sent their deed of obedience containing the restrictions upon which they could tell the people of Canada that they had preserved the independence of parliament, no care whatever was taken of those restrictions. The Canadian order in council is mixed up with the other documents, making the offers of the Australian colonies, with the sanction of parliament. And the same interpretation is given to the whole thing. That is the first step towards Imperial federation.

Now, in order to better judge of the organization of the whole scheme, it is well to study a little how it worked in the other self-governing colonies. We have now the correspondence between the British and the colonial authorities, and, what do we find? First, no offers from Crown colonies were accepted—these were pretty sure to be easily got at any time. What was wanted were offers from the self-governing colonies—not private offers, mind you. Private offers had been accepted at the time of the Nile expedition; but this time they were refused. They were refused from Canada: they were refused also from Victoria and New South Wales. What was wanted, was not men or troops, but what was wanted was a direct committal from the government of every self-governing British colony, to supply arms every time they would be required by the British government. There are other facts not contained in the correspondence, but which I have looked for from different sources, connected with the sending of the Australian contingents, and which are worth while being known in this country. I need not say how different our position is from the position of New Zealand, and the other Australian colonies. First, these colonies have never been involved in any wars, whilst Canada has been involved,

through bad British policy, in two expensive wars with the United States. Second, the Australian colonies may be easily attacked by various European countries, whilst outside of the United States we cannot be attacked, and I think the navy of England would be a far smaller protection for us, than it would be for Australia. I know that the Australian colonies have contributed to a certain extent to the British navy, but, if I am well informed, that contribution is confined to a certain appropriation for the building of ships, which cannot go out of Australian waters, or at least that can be used only for the defence of Australia. Now, that is an important consideration. That contribution of Australia is, to my mind, nothing compared with the heavy sacrifices we have imposed on ourselves, in the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and in the help that we are ready to give to the Pacific cable for the benefit of Imperial defence. Finally, Australia has a great deal of commercial intercourse with South Africa. The Transvaal Uitlanders, for which this war is supposed to be raging, include a fair proportion of Australians, and, therefore, from every point of view, Australia is far more interested in this war than Canada can possibly be. Let us see how some of the Australian colonies dealt with the question. When the Transvaal imbroglio began to be acute, the first offer was made, not by the New Zealand government, as often stated, but by the Queensland government, under date July 11th last. When it came for ratification by the Queensland parliament, three months later, a hot discussion took place, and Mr. Drake, the leader of the opposition said:

That the Defence Force Act clearly laid down that the Queenstown defence force could not be sent beyond Australia for active service.

A resolution was moved censuring the government, for having made the offer, without the authorization of parliament, and in this, in spite of the fact that the offer had been made subject to the authorization of parliament. This vote of censure was moved, and it was defeated only by 11 of a majority, the vote standing 39 to 28, and three or four supporters of the government stood up and said, that although they blamed the government and were in favour of the motion of censure, their only fear was—perhaps it is a fear that is to be found in this House tonight—their only fear was that the government would go out of power, and so they voted against the motion of censure. Therefore, we may fairly say that, in Queensland, the majority of the representatives of the people was against participation in this war.

In New Zealand, the offer was made by parliament itself in September, five members only voting against it. The reason given by the Prime Minister in favour of the measure is worth while being noted:

'The movement,' he said, 'was a step towards a federated empire.'

In New South Wales and Victoria, the governors, Lord Beauchamp and Lord Brassey, seem to have headed the movement. They communicated to the home government private offers which, like the private offers made here, were acknowledged with great politeness by Mr. Chamberlain, but not acted upon. The governments of those two colonies made no offers. From South Australia, no offers whatever, either private or official, were made, and the attitude of parliament later on proved what was the sentiment of the people there. Nevertheless, on the 3rd of October, Mr. Chamberlain accepted gratefully from those three colonies offers that had not been made officially by two of them, and not made at all by one of them. That despatch bears the same date as the despatch sent here. The people were surprised there, just as here, at the form of the letter. Strange to say, that despatch was not sent to Tasmania and Western Australia, which had yet made no offers either. In fact, they seem to be the only two colonies where things were conducted regularly. That is probably the reason why they have been treated with absolute decency. Perhaps, also, Mr. Chamberlain was duly informed that it was not required to put the screws on there. In fact, they are the only colonies where the offers of the legislatures seem to have passed without trouble. Anyhow, the offers were not made by the governments, but by the parliaments, and they were then accepted by the Colonial Office, in exactly the same terms as were accepted the offers that we had not made;—with the exception that Tasmania considered it was a sufficient evidence of loyalty to send 80 men instead of a full unit of 125, and told it plainly to Mr. Chamberlain.

In Victoria and New South Wales, things did not go by themselves. Sir George Turner, Premier of Victoria, as well as Mr. Lyne, Premier of New South Wales, were charged, like our own government, with hesitancy. Sir George Turner said, on October 2:

There is one thing to be borne in mind, and that is, that the empire is not menaced in the slightest degree, and she cannot, therefore, be in need of assistance. . . . Meanwhile, I take it, all that is wanted is to demonstrate that we stand solid with the mother country in this affair; and to make a suitable demonstration, 200 men will serve the purpose as well as 2,000.

Mr. Lyne said the same day that:

He had received many letters suggesting that he was disloyal for not rushing into the public prints at this juncture, saying that he would spend a lot of government money in sending troops to the Transvaal. . . . The Major General was at present discussing it in conference with the officers commanding in the other colonies. In his opinion, if a contingent were sent, it should be an Australian contingent, and no

Australian colony should send troops on its own account.

Appreciating these statements, the *Argus*, of Melbourne, says in a somewhat melancholic tone :

Sir George Turner does not appear to be at all enthusiastic upon the subject, but he is eagerness compared with Mr. Lyne, who with his doubts and his delays, is practically throwing as much cold water as possible upon the movement.

This does not seem to have troubled the Premier of New South Wales, for a few days afterwards he added that he was 'unwilling to commit his colony to any course until parliament has met.' It is remarkable that Mr. Lyne, though representing probably the most loyal colony, the only colony that had previously contributed to the British army, always reserved the rights of parliament. All his messages contained those words : 'Subject to the approval of parliament.'

As you may have noticed also, Mr. Lyne speaks of a conference of commandants. There, as here, Majors General, as well as Governors General, took a most active hand in the game. Their idea was to organize one large Australian contingent, but they failed in their purpose, because, as they said themselves, the views of the various colonies were not at all unanimous, either on the question of principle, or on the extension to be given to its application.

Finally, the vote passed in the parliaments of Victoria and New South Wales by large majorities, but not without a strong and bitter opposition from the labour representatives. I offer to the great loyalists of this House, who denounce as traitors my friend from Laprairie (Mr. Monet) and myself, an extract from a speech delivered in the House of Assembly at Sydney, not by a French Canadian, but, I believe, by a born Englishman, Mr. Holman :

When my country is fighting in a just cause, I will be ready to applaud her, but this is the most iniquitous war that Great Britain has ever undertaken, and I hope England will be defeated.

In the Victoria legislature, Mr. Murray accused England of going to war 'for giving a franchise to the Uitlanders which she did not confer on her own subjects.'

But it was in South Australia that the struggle was the fiercest. The government endeavoured to rush the proposition through the assembly, but the opposition carried an adjournment of the House with the casting vote of the Speaker. I do not offer this to you, Sir, as a precedent, should this House be placed in a similar position. The discussion went on for some days. One of the members said he would rather 'take up arms for the Boers than for the money-grabbing Uitlanders.' The proposition was carried by 6 of a majority, whilst in the legislative council it passed, thanks only to the casting vote of the Speaker.

Now, what about offers of a second contingent? At the beginning of November, just about the same day—strange coincidence—that Lord Minto telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain, that his government was offering a second contingent, Mr. Lyne started a similar movement in Australia. It was met with approval by Sir George Turner. But the replies from Queensland and South Australia were rather cold. Mr. Dickson, Premier of Queensland, wired :

We have already sufficiently shown our loyalty without doing anything more at present.

The Treasurer of South Australia replied, in the name of his government :

We think our loyalty has been as fully demonstrated by the action already taken as it would be by the despatch of a further contingent, for which no need has yet arisen. We therefore do not favour the suggested action.

Those two governments had enough, I believe, with their recent experience in their respective parliaments.

I think I have shown quite conclusively how false, how utterly false, is the legend of the great enthusiasm displayed in all the other colonies. It is true that messages from Governors General frequently speak of that enthusiasm, of patriotic feelings, and all that. But speeches and votes from responsible representatives of the people are, to my mind, more indicative of the popular feeling than messages from Governors. Our great patriots here are much mistaken, even from their imperialistic point of view when they say that Canada stood behind the other colonies. If our government came last in offering the first contingent, they came first in offering the second, and they came first, last and alone in offering, equipping and sending both contingents without the participation and the consent of parliament.

I think I have succeeded also in showing the most extraordinary manner in which the Colonial Secretary conducted the whole thing, and with what zeal he was seconded by the representatives of the British government in every colony. Should the secret correspondence between Downing Street and the Governors of all the colonies be made public, strange things would come to light. But there are sufficient indications to assert that Mr. Chamberlain has taken advantage of an outburst of patriotic feeling all over British possessions to push ahead his long cherished scheme of colonial participation in Imperial wars, or, if you prefer, of a military federation of Great Britain and her colonies.

That our government hesitated, I admit, and I approve of its hesitation. No doubt, the leaders of the party and the political heirs of the great men that have fought so long for the conquest and preservation of complete self-government, did not gladly enter the new movement. The Prime Minister, in spite of the 'no precedent' clause

contained in the order in council, did not deny that the new movement existed, and that we were, more or less, carried away by it. But he said that Canada should always preserve her independence of action and judge each case on its merits.

I applaud to those words, and I know that the right hon. gentleman is sincere when he utters them. They are in conformity with the principles that he upheld all his life long. But how shall he resist the influence of Downing Street? He was sincere, too, when he said, on the 3rd of October, that he would not participate in this war, and ten days later his government decided to participate. And then, governments change. If the right hon. gentleman was not able to resist, shall another be better able to resist?

But supposing we really judge of each case, how shall the case be entered and the judgment rendered? Shall it be treated in the same way as the present one? Shall the merits of the case be entered a Friday afternoon and decided without plena, the next Monday morning, by a judgment dictated by an agent of Downing Street? And shall the judgment be executed during the recess by an order in council at the cost of several millions taken without authorization from the public chest of the country—leaving to parliament but to ratify the whole thing after it is done?

Are these to be the terms upon which Great Britain and her self-governing colonies are going to enter into that glorious alliance of free nations closely united for the purposes of peace and war? I claim, Sir, that such terms are equally unworthy of the parent and of the offspring. I claim they are an insult to the intelligence, to the character and to the loyalty of the free British citizens who have made of Canada the jewel of the British Crown.

It is not my intention to treat, at any length, that question of Imperialism. It is a big question which cannot be decided in the high-handed way in which the disciples of the yellow press in this House would like to settle it. For my part, my opinion on this point is pretty much that of Mr. Morley—and I might add of the hon. member for West Elgin (Mr. Casey). I do not like the word 'empire.' It has a sound of Caesarism, of Napoleonism, of military domination, of sword rule, which is most disagreeable to my British Liberal ear. Besides it threatens us with the burden of militarism, the greatest evil of modern European countries. What has made the wonderful development of the United States? What has attracted to them millions of European farmers and labourers, flying conscription and war taxes? It is the fact that the United States was a country free from those burdens and from the constant rivalries which are keeping suspended over Europe a constant menace of war. The United States are pretty well filled up now,

with capital and population; and they are becoming a military country too. We would just have been ready to take their place as a population and capital-importing country. But, if before we are fully grown up, we put on our shoulders the yoke of militarism, which is proving too heavy for nations enjoying the plenitude of their manhood, we put a stop to our progress; and I claim that it is not the best service we can render either to ourselves, to England, or to what you call the empire.

There is an argument frequently made in favour of our participation in British wars which I want to meet just now. It is, that we have come to the period of our national life where we should give back to England a little of what she has done for us. I was taxed with being a selfish grabber, ready to take everything and to give nothing. One of the Ottawa printed sheets even said on this ground that it was not my loyalty that was questioned, but my sense of honour. As far as past accounts are concerned, I do not think it is the proper time to make a calculation. I cannot say, for my part, what result I would find—though I think I would not be far from agreeing with the hon. the Minister of Trade and Commerce, that England owes more to Canada than Canada to England. But I know this much, that since Canada is a British colony, she has never involved Great Britain in any conflict, whilst she has been thrown into two wars with the United States and her territory made the theatre of hostilities, thanks to a British policy which was bitterly denounced by the greatest British statesmen. We were threatened with another conflict during the secession war, thanks to depredations committed by British vessels; and when the quarrel was settled, the damages were paid a good deal at our expense. At least, Sir John Macdonald said so, as recorded in black and white in his biography and letters.

On boundary matters, a good share of our territory was abandoned to the United States, and the British diplomat who signed the instrument is reported as having said that he would not quarrel for a few degrees of latitude, more or less. We do not know yet what the changes of the Bulwer-Clayton treaty will make us sacrifice on the altar of Imperialism. But we know that the settlement of the French shore question in Newfoundland, a constant menace to peace in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, is postponed for the sake of Greater Britain. British Columbians complain about Chinese and Japanese invasion—but they have been advised by the hon. leader of the opposition (Sir Charles Tupper) not to interfere with Japan until Mr. Chamberlain's African war is over.

We are told that Great Britain saved the United States from a European coalition during their war with Spain—and that, as a

result, the United States are now neutral in South Africa ; and that they have granted a fair settlement of the Venezuelan and Samoan questions through arbitration. We have made our little display of friendship during that war. At the request of the Colonial Office, we have allowed American gunboats to pass through our canals and rivers contrary to existing treaties. We have also constituted ourselves the policemen of Mr. McKinley and expelled Spanish officials who had come to this country to seek refuge. But, strange to say, the gratitude of the neighbour Republic, so conspicuous towards her Imperial sister, cannot be brought to the point, not of granting us favours—we ask for none—but of simply consenting to the interpretation of an existing treaty by an impartial tribunal.

But, reply the imperialists, what is all that compared to what England is constantly doing for our protection ? She taxes her own people, in order to keep an army and a navy for our protection. We are a heavy burden to her and it would be a disgraceful shame to refuse her our own help.

I deny that we are a burden to the empire. I say that if to-morrow Canada was dissevered from the Crown of England, if to-morrow Canada became a portion of that great republic which lies to the south of us, England could not reduce her army by a man nor her navy by a ship. She would want more soldiers and sailors and ironclads than she has to-day in order to maintain her prestige. I say, if this great continent was closed, as closed it would be to the ships of England, under the circumstances I have named, if they had no harbour in which to run or a place where they can obtain a ton of coal or a spar, instead of England being strengthened, she would be enormously weakened. Her power in the Pacific, her possessions in India and China would be imperilled, and her prestige as a nation entirely changed. Instead of relieving her from any charge for diplomatic services, or her army or her navy, it would impose greater burdens upon the taxpayers of Great Britain than at present. I deny that we are a burden. There is not a pound of British money spent in the Dominion of Canada, from end to end, for any Canadian purpose.

The words I have just quoted are not mine. They have fallen from lips whose loyalty or loyism, or Imperialism cannot be questioned. They were uttered a little over six years ago, by an ex-minister of the Crown, a baronet, a Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, a member of the Imperial Federation League. He was then High Commissioner of Canada in England, he is now the leader of the opposition in this House, his name is Sir Charles Tupper.

Moreover, I contend that we have largely contributed to the Imperial defence—more than all the other colonies put together. I contend also that the best way to contribute to that defence is not by sending our men, the best of our blood, to the four corners of the world, but by fortifying our

own territory ; by developing our own resources ; by keeping our population, and by bringing in foreign immigration. I am glad to find, in the speech just quoted, that the same eminent authority fully agrees with me on all those points. The quotation is rather lengthy, but it is so eloquent and convincing that I cannot really cut it short :

I have a word or two more to say with reference to the defence of the empire. They say: Why should Canada, with her enormous mercantile marine, her sails whitening every sea, not contribute from her resources to the defence of the empire? I say she does. I say Canada is discharging that duty nobly and well. No person holds more strongly than I do the unquestionable duty of every British subject, wherever he may be found, to contribute to the support of the defence of this great empire. If you are going to strengthen a fortification, what would you strengthen? The strongest or the weakest part? Of course, the weakest. Where is the weakest part? Is it in England, in the United Kingdom, or Canada, or Australia? No person can question that if England was engaged in war with any great power in the world, they would strike, not in its strongest but weakest part, and therefore, if you wish to strengthen the defences of the empire, to increase the power to resist invasion, the best way to accomplish this, I have no hesitation in saying, is by looking after Canada. Those who say that Canada contributes nothing to the defence of the empire must be very ignorant of facts, at all events, and I would recommend them to peruse a little of that very interesting literature contained in blue-books.

Then, after having reminded the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and other great public works that we have performed to the amount of \$180,000,000 and which he considered a direct contribution to Imperial defence, the hon. gentleman adds :

But some might answer that this work was not done for that purpose, but for commercial purposes. So much stronger our claim. The greatest, the most important, the most vital question in connection with the defence of Canada, which means the defence of one of the most important sections of the great empire, is to people it. This railway, although a commercial line, opens up this magnificent future granary of the world for settlement by stout hearts and strong arms, not only from Great Britain, but by the best men from Scandinavia and Germany and Iceland, to become settlers and as brave defenders of British institutions as native-born Canadians.

Then the hon. gentleman counts in what we expend yearly on our militia and Northwest mounted police, bringing the whole thing, in his estimation, to an annual expenditure of \$10,000,000. And he concludes as follows :

Is not this assisting in the defence of the empire? There is no way of contributing better to this object than in this practical manner in which we are spending annually \$10,000,000 for services of the most vital importance alike

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to Canada and Great Britain. I do not intend to detain you any longer than to say I am quite sure it was only right for me to seize an opportunity—the only one I have had in Canada—to say something upon this question of Imperial federation, and of pointing out what, in my judgment, is the fallacy and the mistaken policy of those who have adopted the line of advocating the unity of the empire upon a basis calculated, in my judgment, not to promote that unity, but to destroy it.

With the exception of Mr. Morley, who told Mr. Chamberlain that he was taking the proper means to ruin the empire, no other British or Canadian statesman has hitherto more conclusively condemned the new movement than the hon. gentleman who is now following and supporting, and even endeavouring to lead that movement in Canada.

Of course, I fully realize the difference of times and circumstances. In 1868, Sir Charles Tupper was safeguarding the interests of Canada in London; in 1900, he is the leader of a wrecked party, fishing for votes in Canada.

I should be allowed, however, to agree with the High Commissioner without being denounced as a French rebel by the Tory leader.

To the convincing arguments of the hon. gentleman, I add this one which is but the illustration of his theory: Should the new movement succeed, should this action of ours be a precedent, we may be placed face to face with a situation like this: Suppose Great Britain at war with a first-rate power, France, Germany or Russia; we supply 10,000, 20,000 or 50,000 men, equipped and armed. Whilst they are engaged going to Paris, or Berlin, or St. Petersburg—which may take nearly as long as going to Pretoria—a difficulty arises between the United States and England: and war is declared. I ask the loudest Imperialists: Where would be the British flag in North America?

I do not deny it, the new movement appears to me as a huge megalomaniac frenzy completely foreign to all British traditions. What has made Great Britain what she is? What has attached to her all her great colonies, if not a policy of peace, of industry, of trade, of complete military and political decentralization—leaving to each colony, the right and power to develop its own resources according to its peculiar situation?

Oh! but times change! Yes, times change,—and men also, by what I can see. But, changes of life, national or individual, must be quiet, progressive, and especially must be in strict conformity with the temperament of the individual or of the nation.

For my part, I still believe in the men and in the policy that made of England the classical land of peace and of liberty. They will stand higher in the annals of history than the noisy, ambitious dominators who want to make England share in the land-grabbing practiced by other nations.

As far as Canada is concerned, I still believe in the men and in the policy that made of her a united country under our confederated system.

I do not ask for independence now, nor at any period within ordinary foresight. Not that independence is not, to my mind, the most legitimate and natural aim to which any colony should tend. But we are not yet enough imbued with the real British liberal spirit of self-government. And this whole question confirms me strongly in that opinion. Should the constitution of our country be left entirely in the hands of our political parties as presently constituted, I am afraid they would play with it, 'a greater football game than has been.'

I was asked where I stood? The reply is short and straight. I stand on the constitution of my country as it is, and I say to those who are not satisfied with it: If you want a change, tell frankly what you want. Do not come in a moment of popular frenzy and try to set fire at the corner of the house.

Mr. Chamberlain and his frantic disciples, and his unconscious followers, both English and Canadian, are leading us towards a constitutional revolution, the consequences of which no man can calculate.

I have said elsewhere, and I repeat here: My objections to any change in our relations with Great Britain, are neither stubborn nor unreasonable. I am open to conviction. But I insist on this point: That we must know exactly where we are now, and whether we are led. Before any change is made, we must be shown distinctly what we are asked to give up, and what we are offered in return. And, even this parliament—and far less its executive committee—have no right to commit the future of this country, without ascertaining exactly what is the true feeling of the people.

I want to be well understood, on this question of popular sanction. I do not mean that it would be sufficient for any political party to enunciate vague ideas on Imperialism, and, being returned to power on its general policy, claim that it is authorized by the people to operate a deep change in our constitutional system, and in our colonial status.

Clear propositions must be laid before parliament and thoroughly discussed, and when the terms are agreed upon, a plebiscite must be taken upon the question, free from all other political issues.

And, our present constitution being an agreement between the various provinces of British North America, a majority of the people of each province must decide in favour of the new system, before it becomes law.

Now, a great many eloquent words have been thrown to the four winds, praising the British rule and its good effect. With most of those utterances I fully agree.

But, there have been two kinds of British rule for the colonies: The military rule, and the constitutional rule. The British constitutional rule, applied to the colonies, is the best that ever existed. The British military rule, has been no better than the similar rule of other European powers. I refer, of course, to modern times only. Soldiers are, after all, pretty much the same under all flags. They are tamed by the sword and they believe the sword to be the best method of ruling. The military rule, even when applied by civilians and governments, has produced greater disasters, perhaps, to Great Britain than to other nations; because of the scattering of British possessions under all skies, and because also of the strong instinct of individual liberty which characterizes the Anglo-Norman, as well as the Scotch and the Irish. The military rule kept India fomenting rebellion for a century; the military rule has lost to England the thirteen American colonies; it sowed and germinated the kernel of the South African problem. The Transvaal and Orange Republics were conceived in hatred at Schlaechter's Nek, when in 1815, five Dutch leaders were hanged by order of the British military governor of Cape Colony. The substitution of constitutional rule by the broad and wise men, now called Little Englanders, cured the wounds made by the sword in Cape Colony and Natal. It made of rebel Dutch, loyal subjects of the British Crown; but it could not tame the old Afrikanders who had crossed the Vaal, during the great trek and before the introduction of the new system. The rule of the sword shall have to be applied again all over South Africa. Old wounds will reopen. Let us wait for the result.

In Canada, we had also a military rule for some time; then a mixture of both rules was tried, or, if you prefer, a constitutional system dominated by the sword; a system by which the representatives of the people were allowed to act just as far as the sword would permit. That could not work. It brought disaffection and rebellion in a country where the most striking examples of loyalty had been given by a conquered foreign population. At last, after a struggle of fifty years, British statesmen were brought to understand that Canadians of all origin were a proud people, a people worthy of freedom, and well able to look after its own interests. We were granted complete self-government. Peace was restored; loyalty to the Crown was solidly re-established; and the love of all Canadians was acquired for ever to British constitutional rule, which they had fought so long to obtain.

But, I tell you here and now, do not try to unsheathe the old sword. Do not bring back the old military rule under a new name, and remember those remarkable words contained in the instructions given by Lord Grey to Lord Elgin, when this

model of constitutional governors came to Canada:

It cannot be too distinctly acknowledged that it is neither possible nor desirable to carry on the government of any of the British provinces in North America in opposition to the opinion of its inhabitants.

You may say my advice is not very authoritative. I admit, my voice is weak; my authority is naught; but I tell the truth, all the same, and those who would close their eyes and shut their ears, would prepare a sad awakening to themselves and to their country. Do not judge of the feelings of the people by the speeches of three or four mayors and by resolutions adopted in a few political clubs.

I regret to be now obliged to weary the House with a few personal explanations; not that I consider my personality of any importance whatever in the matter; but I owe it to my dignity as a man, I owe it to the free citizens who have put their confidence in me and returned me to this House on this very question—to dispel the misinterpretations which have been placed upon my conduct.

I have already stated that I was absent when that Transvaal resolution was rushed through a thin House, one Monday morning of last session, almost without discussion. The moment I was back I told the leader of the government what I thought of it: my apprehension that it was some fine scheme of Mr. Chamberlain to take advantage of this South African crisis in order to drag Canada where she had always refused to go, that is, to active participation in Imperial wars. And there and then I told the right hon. gentleman that should he, during recess and in the advent of war, consent to give way to Mr. Chamberlain's pressure, I would protest publicly and take the best means possible to make my protest good.

When, later on, I saw that some Liberal organs which had theretofore opposed the idea of intervention were giving way, I came to Ottawa and renewed my protest with my leader. That was the very day the right hon. Prime Minister made his declaration in the *Globe*. When I read that statement I was almost reassured. Then came in the same paper the announcement that the government had decided to send a contingent. I came straight to Ottawa and met the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte), and for the third time told the Prime Minister that I could not support the government in that policy. That was the day before the order in council was adopted, and mark my words. Sir, the first time I ever spoke to the Minister of Public Works on the matter. It amuses me greatly when I hear of the domination to which I have been subjected by the hon. gentleman. I do not deny my personal friendship for the hon. minister—neither

have I reason to deny that most of his opinions, though not all of them, as expressed publicly on this question, were quite akin to my own convictions. But as a matter of fact, the Minister of Public Works was absent in Paris. *La Patrie*, which is considered by many people as his organ, had not yet written one line on the matter, when I had discussed the question with the Prime Minister and expressed to him the same views that I hold now.

But moreover, those who think I was influenced by the Minister of Public Works during all that crisis, or at any moment of it, simply prove that they do not know either of us. The very thing which makes our mutual sympathy is a peculiar disposition of temperament common to both of us, but which renders it impossible, even for the Minister of Public Works, to rule me in any way: I mean an unbounded love for freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of action.

The Montreal *Star*, the bluffing organ par excellence, called my action a 'bluff,' and instigated that it was inspired by the Minister of Public Works. The leader of the opposition has thought fit and not unworthy of his high political situation, to pick up that accusation and to brandish it in this House with his usual accompaniments of thundering drums. When I was introduced in this House, I even heard the word 'put up job' whispered in the neighbourhood of the 'kopje' where the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) usually sets his short-range carbine. Unfortunately for the hon. gentleman and for his leader, though they have plenty of ammunition, their powder is too smoky and too gassy, and unlike the Boer shooters, they adjust their spy-glasses the wrong way, and sometimes their bullets strike the rock and fly back on them. If I were wicked, I could apply to those hon. gentlemen the French proverb, 'On ne parle pas de corde dans la maison d'un pendu'—the free translation of which would be, in their case: 'Do not talk treason in a nest of traitors.' Being not an ex-minister of the Crown, nor an ex-High Commissioner, nor the leader of a great party, nor an aspiring leader; being only a free citizen and a modest member of this House, I disdain that kind of personal argument. I let fall where it should lie the vile accusation of 'put up job,' and I simply declare on my word of honour as a man that the course I have taken, I took it of my own free will, because I thought it was my duty to take it. If I did wrong, I deserve the whole blame. If I did right, I claim the whole merit. 'Mon verre n'est pas grand mais je bois dans mon verre.'

Now, I have been asked by many, including the Minister of Public Works: Why did you resign instead of keeping your seat and expressing your opinion in parliament? My reply is this: Had we been treated in this country like every other British self-govern-

ing country has been treated, I would not have had recourse to such extreme means of asserting my views. In Great Britain, where the government have the right to declare war or to accept a declaration of war, they did not dare expend one pound on armaments without summoning parliament. In New Zealand, in all the Australasian colonies, parliaments were consulted. We were the only exception. And the reason given for not calling parliament was that public opinion was so unanimous that the government could legitimately anticipate the sanction of parliament. This theory I could not accept. I resigned so as to consult that portion of the public opinion which I represented in this House. I imposed upon myself the burden of a by-election in a county where it requires 800 miles of a drive to come in contact with the whole population. I did it, so as to be able to sound the opinion of my constituents on that very question without having it coupled with other political issues. Should I have waited for the general elections, some electors might have voted for me because they favoured some other article of my programme; others because they preferred me to any Tory, though bad I may be.

I went to them straight on this issue and told them: 'I do not come here to discuss party politics. You have elected me for five years as a Liberal, and this I am still. When the next general elections come, you will judge me and judge the government on their administrative policy. To-day I have resigned and I come before you to get your opinion on this question, and on this question alone. Are you in favour of participating in this war, or in any war without at least being consulted through your representatives? If so, vote against me; if not, vote for me.' In other words, I took a plebiscite in my county. And instead of coming here to give you my own opinion, presuming the approval of my constituents on a question which had never been submitted to them, I come here to give you the direct answer of four or five thousand loyal subjects of Her Majesty.

It has been said that this was not an argument. My good friend, the junior member for Ottawa (Mr. Belcourt) has written something of the kind in the letter to which I have already referred. Of course, I do not know much of my friend's constituents. He does not seem to have a very high opinion of their judgment—unless he believes the people of Labelle to be very much inferior to those of Ottawa; but I would like him to understand that the people of Labelle are very independent, and perhaps it is the reason I like them and they do not hate me. I wish to be straight with them, as they have been with me.

I could boast, of course, of representing on this question, the unanimity of my constituents. Technically it is true. But really I know it is not. A certain group of Lib-

erals and a certain group of Conservatives did their best to secure a Chamberlainist candidate against me; They rapped at many doors between Montreal and Ottawa; they found some patriots ready to start on an Imperialist campaign, provided they would be supplied with convincing arguments; not to corrupt the people, but to console themselves after a crushing defeat. None were ready to make a fight on mere principle.

I have heard the two leaders of this House, and especially the leader of the opposition, denouncing each other for not having opposed me. The *Country and Citizen* of Toronto, organ of the labouring classes, that I am glad to count amongst the constant supporters of my views on this matter, struck the right key; if neither party fought me, it is because they thought they would risk a good deal to attain a poor result.

In order to show that the electors who have sent me here are not so simple-minded as my friend from Ottawa believes them to be, I will point a fact to the House. At my first meeting at Papineauville, two days after my resignation, the mover of the resolution approving of my course was a Conservative who fought me at the last general elections. Before moving the resolution he told me: 'Mind you, I was against you in 1896, I will oppose you at the next general elections, but this time I am with you.' I could quote hundreds of names of intelligent men who took the same stand. When it became evident that I would be offered no opposition, people were anxious to express their opinion in one way or another. Within a few days my nomination paper was signed by nearly a thousand names. I know of two or three parishes where all the electors came and signed the paper—some from eight or ten miles distant; in fact, in some places I had more names on the paper than I had votes in 1896.

I think this is an expression of public opinion quite as conclusive as articles from the *Montreal Star*. And I venture to say that should the same process of testing public opinion have been applied in most of the constituencies of the province of Quebec, the reply would have been similar.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

#### AFTER RECESS.

**Mr. BOURASSA.** Mr. Speaker, just a word now about my introduction in this House by the Minister of Public Works, which the leader of the opposition has characterized as one of the greatest scandals of parliamentary history. What would have become of the touchy conscience of the hon. gentleman, had he been present in the British Commons when Lord Macaulay, being a member of the government, fought the slavery Bill, introduced by the government as a straight government measure?

Lord Macaulay's attitude and speech were the cause of a vote against the government which was defeated by only seven of a majority, and the real cause of the Bill being defeated in the House of Lords; and still the government of which he was a member refused to accept his resignation.

When I came to Ottawa to take for the second time my oath of fidelity to the Crown, I wanted to present myself alone, and to give my qualifications to the House without any help. But I was told that this could not be done. I vainly endeavoured to seduce the rigid interpreters of parliamentary procedure by asking them to attach to my eccentric introduction a 'no precedent' clause. Just at that moment I happened to meet the Minister of Public Works, who told me: 'Why, I am ready to introduce you. You resigned against my advice; but I am a partisan of freedom; I will introduce you on that ground.' I found the argument quite good. I did not stop to think how far it could scandalize the virginal virtues of the blushing maidens who are coqueting to your left, Mr. Speaker. I beg their pardon here and now, and, I assure them, this is the whole and candid explanation of that great scandal.

Now, I was reproached because of having come to this side of the House instead of joining the other side. I have received many lessons of logic since I have come to parliament—but I must be desperately obtuse for I confess I cannot understand the argument of the hon. gentlemen opposite.

Why should I have gone to the other side? Is it because the leader of the opposition preached all over the land that the Liberals did not go far enough in the direction in which I refused to follow them? Is it because the member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) wanted to send 5,000 French Canadians to South Africa?

**Mr. BERGERON.** I never said that.

**Mr. BOURASSA.** I am glad the hon. gentleman (Mr. Bergeron) goes back on the report of his speech. Is it because the rank and file of the Tory press denounced the government as half traitors and myself as a double traitor?

It is true that on the question of expenditure the two leaders have met half way, or as my friend from Laprairie and Naperville would say, have divided between themselves the apple of sin. But that does not make an archangel of the hon. leader of the opposition and clear him of his long career. The very hesitancy which he has bitterly reproached as a crime to the government would be sufficient to prevent me from falling into the lion's den. That hesitancy is just what would give me some indulgence for the government. When a man hesitates before misdoing, it is a sign that he has still some conscience.

Because I condemn the men who have committed a sin, shall I throw my lot with

men born and fed in the sin. Because I charge the government with having perpetrated an act of Toryism, shall I go and put myself under the very yoke of Toryism?

There are men on your left, Mr. Speaker, for whom I have great esteem and respect; as there are men on this side, for whom I have not the same sympathy as I have for others. In other words, there are Liberals to your left and Tories to your right—giving to those words a much broader meaning than they usually have under the narrow party label. But the domineering element of the opposition is the essence of the worst kind of Toryism. I heard the other day my esteemed friend from Terrebonne (Mr. Chauvin) castigate in a few words the member for West York. I heard some time previous the hon. member for Three Rivers (Sir Adolphe Caron) lecture with his usual tact and keenness those people who talk despicably of moccasin government. That shows clearly the difference between what I call the Liberals and the Tories to your left. I would have no objection to work hand-in-hand with the liberal-hearted Conservatives of all origins and creeds, but I have the deepest born antipathy for Tories dyed in the wool. I am a Liberal of the British school. I am a disciple of Burke, Fox, Bright, Gladstone, and of the other Little Englanders who made Great Britain and her possessions what they are, and I will not desert the ranks of their true followers because Mr. Chamberlain, or other renegade Radicals might choose in their megalomaniac ambition to call those great men blunderers. It may be said that Gladstone changed his mind on many questions. Yes, he did. But—and this was the mark of his genius, as well as of his born Liberalism—all his changes were from the narrower to the broader. In church matters, in state affairs, in sociology, all his changes were a constant progress towards Liberalism. A Liberal I was born, and a Liberal I will die. A Liberal I shall remain, even through waves of Toryism which might swamp for a moment the fields of Liberalism. And no king, governor or minister, even in my own party, and no blind crowd can force me to be anything else.

In my letter to the Prime Minister, and in all my speeches in Labelle, as well as in my private utterances, I said that I still supported the present administration on its general policy, because I still believed it was a good one. Therefore, on general grounds, my natural place was here in my old seat.

In fact, I may say, that I am the only man entitled to occupy his old seat in this House, with my hon. friend from Laprairie (Mr. Monet), and perhaps a few others whom we shall hear from to-night, because I am the only man who is upholding the same principles and preaching the same doctrine that I held six months ago.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

**Mr. BOURASSA.** Hon. gentlemen opposite should not applaud so much. They should not forget the doctrine which their leader himself has preached so eloquently and so strongly on many previous occasions. Besides my hon. friend from Laprairie and the other hon. gentlemen who are going to vote with us to-night, no party in this House has the right to laugh at the expense of their opponents.

On this special question I condemn the action of the government; and I have come here to tell them that my constituents approve of my course, and have given me a mandate to warn them, in a friendly spirit, against any future attempt to pass over the constitution and to commit the future of this country without the full knowledge and consent of parliament and of the people.

Now, a word to the hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron), or rather to those—and they are quite numerous—who entertain the idea which he has expressed a couple of times, especially once here in Ottawa. The hon. gentleman was reported as saying that Papineau had smashed the constitution, and that if I could I would do the same. Elsewhere he was reported as saying that the Liberals, from Papineau down, had no principles. First, to hear the member for Beauharnois talking principles makes upon me about the same impression that I would feel listening to selections from 'Faust' or 'Il Trovatore' executed by a choir of deaf mutes. But when he accuses me of being led by hereditary tendencies, I plead guilty to the charge, and I will take this occasion—the first and the last I will choose to do it—to inflict upon this House a short page of family history. I do it because it is, to my mind, quite illustrative of the development of British institutions in French Canada.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

**Mr. BOURASSA.** Hon. gentlemen opposite, especially their hon. leader, who is so much inclined to mix up the history of Canada and a good chapter of the history of the empire with his own biography, should easily pardon me this abuse of the patience of the House.

In 1776, when Montgomery and Arnold were besieging Quebec, where General Carleton was imprisoned with his little army, important messages came to Montreal addressed to the general. Two young French Canadians offered to go and deliver those despatches. They drove, but mostly walked, the sixty leagues, that separated the two cities. They passed through the American forces and the very few disaffected districts between the two cities. After a great display of skill and courage, having had to pass within gunshot of the lines of the investing army, they entered Quebec. They delivered their messages to the governor, and then served as free volunteers until the siege was raised. One of

those young men was the great-grandfather of our present Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, Mr. Lamothe, whose nomination the Ottawa *Citizen* denounced to the vindication of the anti-moccasins. The other was my great-grandfather; his name was Joseph Papineau.

In 1791, when parliamentary institutions were granted to Lower Canada, Joseph Papineau was elected as a representative of the people. He had fought for the Crown when the Crown was assailed by foreign foes. He fought against the Crown as long as the Crown stood against the people. He died fifty years later, what he had been all his life long: A loyal subject of the Crown of England, and a faithful defender of the Canadian people.

In 1812, a young French Canadian lawyer, a member of the legislative assembly of Quebec, abandoned his legal and parliamentary occupations to go and fight for the British flag, once more assailed by Anglo-Saxons. He served during the whole campaign. When the honour of the British flag was out of danger, thanks a good deal to his compatriots, he went back to parliament; and for twenty-five years, he fought for the rights of the people against the representatives of the Crown. His name was Louis Joseph Papineau. He was the son of Joseph Papineau, and I have no reason to blush in saying that my mother was his daughter.

In 1837, a large meeting was held at St. Charles. Papineau was there to meet thousands and thousands of British citizens who wanted to get their rights of British citizenship. He appealed to them on the ground of the constitution, and begged of them to avoid all riotous agitation. An English Protestant, Dr. Nelson, interrupted him, and said: 'I differ with Mr. Papineau. The time has passed for peaceful means; take your spoons and forks, melt them and make bullets.' The feelings of the people were aroused by fifty years of tyranny offered to them as a reward for eighty years of staunch loyalty. They listened to the inflammatory words of the English rebel and disregarded the constitutional appeals of the loyal Frenchman.

This is the history of the men from whom I have taken my double sentiment of loyalty to the Crown against foreign intrusion, and of loyalty to the people against Crown or faction abuses. I repeat I have no reason to be ashamed of it. And many men who enjoy now our free political institutions and even abuse them, owe them to those men they call traitors and unprincipled agitators.

Sir, I have no intention to proclaim once more the loyalty of the French Canadians who virtually saved Canada to England on two different occasions, and at times when they were most unfairly treated by British officials. That has been stated frequently

in this House and during this session. Our history is there. Those who refuse to read it or to understand it simply prove that they lack all good faith or that they are completely devoid of any sense of comprehension. It is useless to try and convince them.

But I have read somewhere—I think in the Toronto *News*, a statement which I want to contradict here and now. It is that in 1776 and 1812 the French Canadians were not led to action by their loyalty but simply because they wanted to preserve their property. That is rather a pretty bad reflection upon our American friends and dearest kinsmen. It would mean that they were nothing but barbarians, totally ignorant of the most elementary rules of warfare between civilized peoples. Fortunately, it is completely refuted by history. In 1775-6, especially, the American army occupied Montreal and a good portion of Lower Canada, and far from making any depreciation, they did everything possible to induce the French Canadians to join them. They promised free government to the leaders; they respected private property; they bought farm products at a high price. The remarkable faithfulness of French loyalty was made only more striking by the very few individuals who gave way to American seductions. As the member for Three Rivers (Sir Adolphe Caron), and the member for Terrebonne (Mr. Chauvin), said very properly on a previous occasion, the Catholic clergy was a tremendous factor during both those periods of 1776 and 1812 by strengthening the loyalty of the people through the highest moral and religious motives. There was also, I admit, that remarkable characteristic of our people, which rulers of this country should never forget; I mean their innate reluctance to throw themselves into the unknown. They are easily contented with what they have, and do not care to leave it without knowing exactly what is offered to them in return.

Now, if we speak of national property, I wish to remind this House that no part of Canada would have better profited by annexation to the United States than the province of Quebec. Had we joined the union in 1776, Montreal and Quebec would be now rivals of New York and Boston; our marvelous water powers would be in full activity; the St. Lawrence would be the great transportation water route between Europe and America; our rural districts would be the feeders of the great north-eastern cities. It may be said: But your people would have been swamped. Well, first, we would have kept the million of our countrymen who are now across the borders; and then we are not so easy to swamp as many people think. We follow to the letter the Biblical advice: 'Crescite et multiplicamini.' We have a remarkable disposition for living on good terms with others, and it comes from this fact:

Though deeply attached to our convictions, we have the greatest toleration for other people's convictions; without losing our language we learn quite easily to talk our neighbour's language. The result is that, as a rule, English-speaking people who live with us have no idea of finding fault with our remaining French. I am sure that should the member for West York (Mr. Wallace) come and reside in Quebec, it would not take two years before he would resign his pontificate in the Orange Association to become 'marguillier' of one of our good parishes and the president of a St. Jean Baptiste Society.

Anyhow, I insist on this point, that, from a purely material point of view, it would have been far better for us to have become Americans. I am glad we did not do it, because I prefer British institutions as we conquered them, to American institutions. And so long as Great Britain is faithful to her word, given to us after eighty years of hard struggle, I want to be and our people want to be faithful to our own word. But let the good faith be equal on both sides! Of course, I realize how hard it is for some people to understand a point of honour like this. It must be utterly inconceivable for the political descendants of the happy family compact and oligarchic rulers—of those great loyalists who shot and hanged honest Canadians, both French and English, who did not want to be treated as political helots on their native soil. Those same loyalists were the men who rotten-egged the representative of the Crown when he wanted to give in practice, as well as by law, equal justice to all classes and nationalities; they were also the only agitators for annexation to the United States when they found out that the public chest was no more to be confounded with their private purse. From those high-hearted and broad-minded patriots was born the loyal Tory-Imperialist party.

I have now to say something of the parliamentary significance of my proposition, and to meet beforehand the objection that it implies a vote of want of confidence in the government.

Not pretending to be an authority on matters of procedure, I will not venture wearying the House with a course of parliamentary law. I will just select from the annals of this House, a debate where the question was fully treated by high authorities of both parties. The lesson should be the more fruitful, that most of the teachers are still members of this House, or have reached the serene regions of the Upper House—which, I hope, shall not be considered as a nullification of their science.

I have alluded already to the debate raised in this House in 1893, by the rebel, anti-British speech of the Controller of Customs (Mr. Wallace). On that occasion, Mr. Dawson, member for Algoma, moved in amendment to the government's proposition of go-

ing into supply, a motion which termed itself 'severest censure' of Mr. Wallace's action and speech.

The first supporter of the government to speak on the motion, was Mr. Kenny, member for Halifax. He repudiated the sentiments expressed by the Controller of Customs, but declared he would not vote for the motion, as he considered it a motion of want of confidence in the government.

Mr. Mills, member for Bothwell, now Minister of Justice, and therefore the legal adviser of the present government, replied as follows to Mr. Kenny:

I think the hon. member for Halifax, in referring to this motion as a motion of want of confidence in the government, takes a wholly erroneous view. . . . It is quite true, Sir, that a government may treat any motion, even a motion for the adjournment of the House, as a motion of want of confidence; but no government is obliged to treat an ordinary motion as a motion of want of confidence; and, so far as I know, no government has hitherto treated as such a motion in amendment to go into supply. Why, Sir, let me refer the House to a motion which I myself made two or three years ago on going into supply, with reference to the distribution of public moneys for the construction of public works. The leader of the House, on that occasion, the late Prime Minister, Sir John Macdonald, accepted that motion and supported it in opposition to the government's own proposition to go into supply. Let me refer to another case. A few years ago, on the proposal to go into supply, the late member for Niagara, Mr. Plumb, moved a motion on the subject of the boundary award, and the government supported that motion against their own proposition to go into supply.

Mr. Foster, Minister of Finance, and leader of the House, replied to Mr. Mills, fought the motion, which he called 'a mischievous party motion, meant simply to embarrass the government,' but did not call it directly a motion of want of confidence. Sir Richard Cartwright followed him, and referring to Mr. Mills' remarks, he said:

As my hon. friend pointed out, there are numerous cases when the government have chosen to accept motions on going into Committee of Supply; and he might have added to the motions to which he alluded a motion moved by myself, defining the authority of the Committee of Public Accounts, and which was accepted by the then leader of the House, and allowed to pass, although it was moved on going into Committee of Supply.

Mr. Costigan, Secretary of State, though not agreeing with all the terms of Mr. Dawson's motion, said the following words, which, I think, apply very properly to my motion:

The motion that has been placed in your hands, Mr. Speaker, is one of principle. . . . I say that the question of allegiance and obedience to the laws and constitution is one that affects every portion of the people, and our laws and constitution must be observed and respected. Holding these opinions, I shall vote for the amendment.

Mr. Curran, Solicitor General, therefore a member of the government, though not of the cabinet, supported also the motion. Sir Hector Langevin said :

Now, it is a well known fact that such motions are not necessarily votes of non-confidence. On the contrary, very often these amendments are carried by the House, and the government does not consider that they should resign, but proceed with supply as soon as the amendment is disposed of. I have seen that repeatedly, and I have even seen the late leader of the government, Sir John Macdonald, on several occasions, accept a motion of that kind, and have it carried in the House, showing that such a motion is not a vote of non-confidence.

Sir Adolphe Caron, Postmaster General, though opposing the motion, said :

I know myself of amendments which were moved on going into supply which certainly our late lamented leader, Sir John Macdonald accepted, or without accepting, did not consider as a direct vote of want of confidence. But I fail to recollect a single instance where Sir John Macdonald, when leading the House, would not consider an amendment to supply censuring a member of the government, as a direct attack against the government.

So much so, that before the vote was taken, Mr. Kenny explained to the House that, seeing a member of the cabinet, and another member of the government supporting the motion, he could no more think that it implied want of confidence, and he voted for the amendment.

I think, Sir, that my case is a far clearer one than that which I have just quoted. In the former case, the motion in amendment to the ministerial proposition to go into supply was, as stated by the Postmaster General, a direct vote of censure against one member of the government. It was, nevertheless, supported by two members and several friends of the government on account of the principle of respect to law and constitution contained therein.

In the present instance, my motion implies no direct blame or censure upon the government. It is the ratification by parliament of the principles laid down in their order in council of October last, and reasserted, though in a milder way, in their public statement of the same date. What does the order in council say ?

Such an expenditure, under such circumstances, cannot be regarded as a departure from the well known principles of constitutional government and colonial practice, nor construed as a precedent for future action.

And what comment did the hon. Minister of Finance put upon that reservation in the official statement he made the same day in the name of the cabinet :

The sending of the contingent to the Transvaal involved not only the expenditure of considerable money, but the taking of an important step that had not been contemplated by parliament, and which might possibly be regarded as a precedent, when in a matter of so much consequence pre-

cedents ought not hastily to be established. Hence the first view that prevailed was that parliament should be summoned to confirm the action which was proposed.

What did *La Patrie*, which is often called the organ of the Minister of Public Works, add to the ministerial statement :

The resolution to which Sir Wilfrid and his colleagues have come, does not commit this country to any action in the future. I think I know that this point has been settled in such way as to leave no doubt in the public mind.

The Prime Minister himself, at the opening of this session, stated that he intended preserving the legislative independence and freedom of action of this country.

If the government were sincere, as undoubtedly they were, when they gave the assurance, both to the Colonial Secretary and to the Canadian people, that they did not intend creating a precedent, and committing this country to any future action, they cannot refuse to support my motion.

It may be objected, that my motion is useless, that it is a simple repetition of what the government themselves have stated. Suppose it would be useless, there could be no objection on the part of the government to let it pass without opposition. But, I claim that, far from being useless, it deserves the favourable consideration of the House.

As I have stated on a previous occasion, the action of the government is a double one. It contains a question of fact which is the sending of Canadian volunteers to South Africa, and a question of right which is the sovereignty of parliament and of the people as regards any constitutional change which may bring our participation in Imperial wars. The government consented to the fact with the intention, of course, of having that fact ratified by parliament—but also under the explicit reservation of constitutional principles which they considered to be under the exclusive power of parliament. They said themselves that they would not have consented to the action without that reservation. They asked us the other day to ratify their action. I now ask the House to sanction the reservation, and to uphold the principles which the government themselves asserted in their order in council, as well as in their official declaration. My motion is the natural consequence of those documents, as well as the completion of the Bill, adopted by this House to ratify the unauthorized expenditure of the government. You have sanctioned the fact, now sanction the right.

But, there is another reason for making my motion, not only useful, but absolutely imperative. It comes from the grave facts which I have put before the House. The whole of the reptile press, as well as a large portion of the decent newspapers of England and Canada, Liberal, Conservative, and Independent ; and I may say the unan-

ility of the foreign press, have entirely overlooked the reservation made by the government in their order in council. Either approving or condemning, they have given to the government's action, the same interpretation as that which I gave myself, and that is: The accomplished fact makes the precedent. But what is still graver and gives far more strength to my contention, is that the British government, through the official medium of the Colonial Secretary, at whose request we acted, has given to that action the same significance. He has accepted the sending of our troops as a proof of our willingness to do it again, and he has ignored entirely the reservation made by the Canadian government and finally the same interpretation seems to have been given by the head of our executive committee, by the representative of the Crown in Canada. So that to-day, not only is the doubt of which *La Patrie* spoke is still existing in the public mind, but the overwhelming conviction is that a precedent has been created.

In presence of such facts, should this House refuse to sanction the reservation made by the government in their Order in Council and refuse to adopt my motion, it would mean that we reject that reservation and accept the general and official interpretation put upon the ministerial action. Such a course, on the part of the government, would constitute the loudest stultification of themselves. On our part, it would be the most emphatic and humiliating admission of subserviency that a free representative body could give. It would bring us back to the time of the Long Parliament.

I freely confess that should my motion be adopted, it would greatly minimize the best of my argument, which is that the accomplished fact constitutes a precedent notwithstanding all the reservations that could be made.

But this I do not mind. I have not taken my course to gain notoriety or popularity. My only aim is to get an assertion by this House of the soundest and oldest principles of representative government. I simply ask that this House shall affirm that Canada is a free

country, that Canada is a country ready to meet Great Britain on a fair proposition, if Great Britain tells us that she requires our help. Then, if new propositions have to be laid down touching the policy that is going to govern this country, neither the Colonial Secretary, nor any member of a British government, nor any representative of the Imperial government in this country has the right to say what shall be the course of a free people. It is our duty, as a free parliament, representing the free opinion of the people, to say what is to be the policy of the people. I am not going to pass judgment on the action of the government; I have not voted against their resolution, at the expense of what was called my logic. I have been accused of coming back to the fold and of accepting again the yoke of the government. I do not mind that, because I wanted to give to the government a proof of my good faith. I do not mind the money that is asked, but I ask you to repeat here what was declared in the order in council, and to tell the British government that this is a free parliament elected by the free opinion of the people. Therefore, I think my position is a right one, and should it be accepted by this House at the expense of the views I have already given, at the expense of the stand I have taken in my county, I do not mind. I feel that I will be amply rewarded if I secure a declaration that there is still in existence the true British spirit of self-government and liberty, and therefore, I move: That all the words after that be struck out and that the following be inserted:

That this House insists on the principle of the sovereignty and the independence of parliament as the basis of British institutions and the safeguard of the civil and political liberties of British citizens, and refuses consequently to consider the action of the government in relation to the South African war as a precedent which should commit this country to any action in the future.

That this House further declares that it opposes any change in the political and military relations which exist at present between Canada and Great Britain unless such change is initiated by the sovereign will of parliament and sanctioned by the people of Canada